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#SHAHBAG

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Pragati

The Indian National Interest Review

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Pakistan: Myths and consequences

The Islamic and irrationally anti-Indian elements in the self-image of the Pakistani state have led it down a self-destructive path

Salman Rushdie famously said that Pakistan was “insufficiently imagined”. To say that a state is insufficiently imagined is to run into thorny questions regarding the appropriate quantum of imagination needed by any state; there is no single answer and at their edges (internal or external), all states and all imaginings are contested. But while the mythology used to justify any state is elastic and details vary in every case, it is not infinitely elastic and all options are not equally workable. I will argue that Pakistan in particular was insufficiently imagined prior to birth; that once it came into being, the mythology favoured by its establishment proved to be self-destructive; and that it must be corrected (surreptitiously if need be, openly if possible) in order to permit the emergence of workable solutions to myriad common post-colonial problems.

In state sponsored textbooks it is claimed that Pakistan was established because two separate nations lived in India — one of the Muslims and the other of the Hindus (or Muslims and

non-Muslims, to be more accurate) and the Muslims needed a separate state to develop individually and collectively. That the two ‘nations’ lived mixed up with each other in a vast subcontinent and were highly heterogeneous were considered minor details. What was important was the fact that the Muslim elite of North India (primarily Turk and Afghan in origin) entered India as conquerors from ‘Islamic’ lands. And even though they then settled in India and intermarried with locals and evolved a new Indo-Muslim identity, they remained a separate nation from the locals. More surprisingly, those locals who converted to the faith of the conquerors also became a separate nation, even as they continued to live in their ancestral lands alongside their unconverted neighbours.

Accompanying this was the belief that the last millennium of Indian history was a period of Muslim rule followed by a period of British rule. Little mention was made of the fact that the relatively unified rule of the Delhi Sultanate and the Moghul empire (both of which can

be fairly characterised as “Muslim rule”, Hindu generals, satraps and ministers notwithstanding) collapsed in the 18th century to be replaced in large sections of India by the Maratha empire, and then by the Sikh Kingdom of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

In this dream, Islam is not a static revealed truth; it is an evolving idea, a fire in the minds of men that drives them to endlessly create something new and heroic, yet rooted and eternal

During British rule the cultural goods of the North Indian Muslim elite (Urdu language, literate “high church” Islam, Islamicate social customs, a sense of separateness and a sense of superiority to the ‘natives’) became more of a model for the emerging Muslim middle class. But even as many leading lights of the North Indian Muslim community fought hard to promote what they saw as “Muslim interests”, they were also attracted by the emerging notion of a modern and democratic Indian whole. Some of these leaders (including Jinnah) simultaneously espoused elements of Muslim nationalism and secularised Indian nationalism and sometimes went back and forth between these ideals or tried to aim for a synthesis. Some of this multi-tasking was undoubtedly the result of sophisticated political

calculation by very smart people, but it must not be forgotten that a lot of it was also a reflection of the half-formed and still evolving nature of these categories.

In this confused and somewhat chaotic setting it is hard to argue that any particular outcome was inevitable or pre-ordained. But the tension between the Muslim elite’s sense of Muslim distinctiveness (a sense cultivated by the British rulers for their own purposes at every step) on the one hand and emerging Indian nationalism dominated by Hindus on the other, led some Muslims to think about various schemes of separation. Allama Iqbal, for example, imagined a separate Muslim country in the Northwest that would serve as India’s martial bulwark against central Asian marauders, while also acting as a laboratory for the development of an as yet uncreated Islamicate culture of his dreams. In this dream, Islam is not a static revealed truth; it is an evolving idea, a fire in the minds of men that drives them to endlessly create something new and heroic, yet rooted and eternal. The audience for this romantic but sophisticated fantasy was necessarily small, but less sophisticated versions of this vision played a role in exciting the minds of many young and newly-educated men during the movement for Pakistan.

Other visions of Pakistan were cruder and more literal minded and imagined a state where perfect Islamic law (already revealed and written in books, waiting to be applied as it had once been applied in the golden ages past) replaced “failed heathen systems”. Since no orthodox school of Sunni Islamic law had actually evolved beyond medieval models there was no way those blueprints could create a working modern state. But these



Muzaffar Bukhari

mythical visions had played a prominent role in the propaganda of the Muslim league and they prepared the ground in which crude Salafist fantasies would find traction in the years to come.

The historian Ayesha Jalal has convincingly argued that Mr. Jinnah in fact wanted to use the threat of partition as a bargaining ploy to secure more rights for the Muslim political elite within united India. In this view, Mr. Jinnah and his lieutenants had never fully answered the many objections that were raised against the partition scheme because they never really expected the scheme to be carried out, but via a complicated series of mistakes and miscalculations on all sides, partition ended up becoming a reality.

Pakistan as it was created did not really overlap the domain of the North Indian Muslim elite who had been the main drivers of this demand. One way to solve this problem was to imagine the actually existing Pakistan as a transitional phase between British India and the re-establishment of some future Delhi sultanate (this crackpot scheme being the official ideology of the Zaid Hamid faction of Paknationalism). The other was to imagine that the cultural heritage of the Delhi Sultanate has now been transferred in toto to Pakistan by the North Indian Muslim elite and would grow and prosper here as the unifying culture of Pakistan. This package frequently included conscious or unconscious disdain for the existing cultures of Bengal, Punjab, Sindh, Pakhtoonkhwa and Baluchistan, and an irrational determination to expiate any sign of 'Indian-ness' in the greater cause of Urdu-speaking North Indian Muslim high culture.

The Bengalis found this so hard to swallow that they opted out of the experiment altogether. And in spite of the creation of a pan-Pakistan middle class that has been acculturated into a (necessarily shallow) version of North Indian Urdu culture, these contradictions remain potent in the West as well. Separatist movements are one consequence of this attempt to impose a shallow and partly imaginary Pakistani nationalism on existing cultures; a more insidious consequence is the accelerated decay of deeply rooted cultural frameworks and the growth of shallow Saudi or Western (or mixed-up) cultural tendencies in the resulting vacuum.

Pakistan had been created utilising the language of Muslim separatism and the millenarian excitement generated by the promise of a "Muslim state".

Other contradictions at the heart of the "two-nation theory" proved equally deadly in the long run. Pakistan had been created utilising the language of Muslim separatism and the millenarian excitement generated by the promise of a "Muslim state". And even at the outset, these ideas were not just convenient tools for the elite to achieve economic objectives (a view common among leftists). The elite itself was Muslim. To varying extents, its members shared the myths of past greatness and future Islamic revival that they had just

used to obtain a state for themselves. In a world where modern European institutions and ideas were taken for granted even by relatively orthodox upper class Muslims, the disruptive political possibilities hidden in orthodox Islamism were not easily appreciated and dreams of Islamic revival could take on almost any form.

Most hardcore Islamists had not supported the Pakistan movement precisely because they regarded the Muslim League leadership as Westernised modernists ignorant of orthodox Islamic thought. But they were quick to realise that Pakistan was a natural laboratory for their Islamic experiments. The fact that fantasies of Islamic rule had been projected as models for the state made it very difficult to argue against those who claimed to speak in the name of pure Islam. Besides, orthodox Islamists possessed the twin notions of apostasy and blasphemy that are extremely potent tools to suppress any challenge to Islamic orthodoxy. These tools create problems in all modern Muslim states, but they are especially hard to resist in a state supposedly created so that Islamic ideals could “order the collective life of Muslims in the light of the *Quran* and *Sunnah*” (to quote the Objectives Resolution). Consequently the modern Pakistani state has slowly but steadily ceded ideological ground to Islamists who can legitimately claim to be closer to the Islam described in orthodox

books and taught in orthodox schools.

This rise of Islamic politics was not an overnight process. In fact Left wing slogans had far more appeal in the first 30 years of Pakistan than any Islamic slogan. But the Islamists proved far-sighted and persistent and used a succession of wedge issues to insert their agenda into national politics. From the anti-Ahmedi agitation of 1953 to the successful effort to declare them non-Muslim in 1974; and from the free-lance enforcement of blasphemy laws in British times (albeit one that prominent Muslim leaders including Allama Iqbal supported in the Ilm Deen case in the 1920s) to the powerful instrument of legal intimidation, bullying and state-sponsored murder created by General Zia in the 1980s, the Islamists have steadily tightened their grip. Having adopted Islam and irrational denial of our own Indian-ness as core elements of the state, the ‘modern’ factions of the establishment lack the vocabulary to answer the fanatics. This has allowed a relatively small number of Islamist officers to promote wildly dangerous policies (like training half a million armed Islamic fanatics in the 1990s) without saner elements being able to stop them. This unique “own-goal”, unprecedented in the history of modern states, is impossible to understand without reference to the Islamic and irrationally anti-Indian element in the self-image of the Pakistani state.

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History of Indian economic thought: the forgotten subject

The dynamic political economy of today needs many of the economic thoughts that were propounded by our early nation builders to set this nation straight, again.



Sean Kirkpatrick

It is true that the world realised the importance of the history of economic thought long before India, as an integral part of economic education, for not just students and teachers but also policy makers and researchers. It is also recognised that this discipline (if well structured in schools and colleges) inevitably helped people integrate with

the contemporary public policy discourse. However, it has not taken off in India yet, despite the knowledge globalisation, vigorously followed all these years.

After more than sixty years of independence, lack of interest among economics students has resulted in this

discipline remaining at its infancy, covering only a few thoughts which the elite understand. Economic historian Mark Blaug remarked that “it is no secret that the study of the history of economic thought is held in low esteem by mainstream economists and sometimes openly disparaged as a type of antiquarianism”. However, compared to the history of western economic thoughts, the Indian economic thoughts are still in its embryonic stage.

Joseph Schumpeter, one of the most persuasive economists in history of economic thought, spelt out in his book *History of Economic Analysis*, the following three ‘profits’ or reasons for studying the discipline. One, studying history of economic thoughts provides a sense of direction and meaning to students. Two, it offers new ways to look at familiar problems. Three, the most important in Schumpeter’s own ranking, it provides new insights into the ways of the human mind.

The history of Indian economic thought is little known either in India or elsewhere. Hardly any research is being done by economists. The subject has the potential in offering a variety of principles that could help Economics evolve further. It is important to revitalise the discipline and instill a fresh zeal among students and others.

The basic foundation for teaching of Indian Economics as a separate subject were laid down by Dadabhai Naoroji. But it was Mahadev Govind Ranade who gave shape to Indian economics and succeeded in establishing it as a separate subject in the early days, much before the momentum gained for Independence movements. Indeed, he is hailed as the “father of Indian economics”.

There are arguments which indicate that the term “Indian Economics” was introduced by nineteenth-century Indian writers who believed that the *Principles of Economics*, as they are taught in the west, did not apply to Indian conditions. In fact, economist Brij Narain said there “is no science of Indian economics” as apart from the science of “general economics” because people in India are economically motivated as men in other parts of the world. This was, for example, witnessed by Ram Mohan Roy who stressed the importance of private property on the tradition of classical economics pursued by great economists and philosophers like Jeremy Bentham and Adam Smith.

The history of Indian economic thought is little known either in India or elsewhere.

Economists like B R Ambedkar too advocated for radical ideas such as free banking (against government monopoly of printing legal tender), gold standard, decentralised planning, private property right, economic freedom or free enterprises, individual liberty, etc. Moreover, Ambedkar had well understood the knowledge problem in society and its relevance for decentralised planning rather than centralised planning (as perceived in the Independent India).

Unfortunately, one of the great tragedies that continues to exist in the history of Indian economic thought is the marginalisation of economic thoughts of stalwarts like R B Lotvala, V S Srinivasa Sastri, Lajpat Rai, Gopalakrishna

Gokhale, Ranade, S V Doraiswami, B R Ambedkar, C. Rajagopalachari, B R Shenoy, N A Palkhivala, Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay, Minoo Masani and the likes, despite their original and novel contributions made to Indian economic thought.

India's loss has become the west's gain as some of S V Doraiswami and Ambedkar's economic theories figured prominently in the 20th century western economic thoughts such as economic and political decision making in an environment of dispersed knowledge, alternative monetary system like denationalised production of money and decentralised approach to planning. Similarly, there are several theories of these stalwarts that have been considerably underestimated and, thus, excluded from the history of Indian economic thoughts. Eminent economists like Rajaji and Shenoy were staunch proponents of economic freedom in Independent India, Rajaji is indeed a "father of economic freedom", envisioned for 21st century India. Similarly, late Nani Palkhivala argued profoundly for rationalisation of budget making and taxation programmes; R B Lotvala who founded The Indian Libertarian: Independent Journal of Public Affairs in 1954 based on the principles of free enterprises system to

counter the socialist pattern that prevailed at that time.

Half baked analysis of fairly well researched works, poses another problem for the history of Indian economic thought. For instance, M K Gandhi's views was that the higher education system should be in the hands of private sector that runs companies and corporation as it has incentive to run it efficiently, (instead of inefficient system of government) hardly find mention. Economist Narendra Jadhav once opined that the widespread ignorance of some of the Indian economic thoughts is because of the "intellectual slavery of the Indian society". The future direction of the history of Indian economic thought depends on how open minded economists broaden the logical thinking with sound reasoning.

Excluding original contributions made by our own thinkers and economists is unethical and would result in collective failure to draw the right lessons from our antiquity, which is detrimental to the development of the discipline itself. The dynamic political economy of today needs many of the economic thoughts that were propounded by our early nation builders and thinkers to set this nation straight, again. Time will tell us how we move from here.

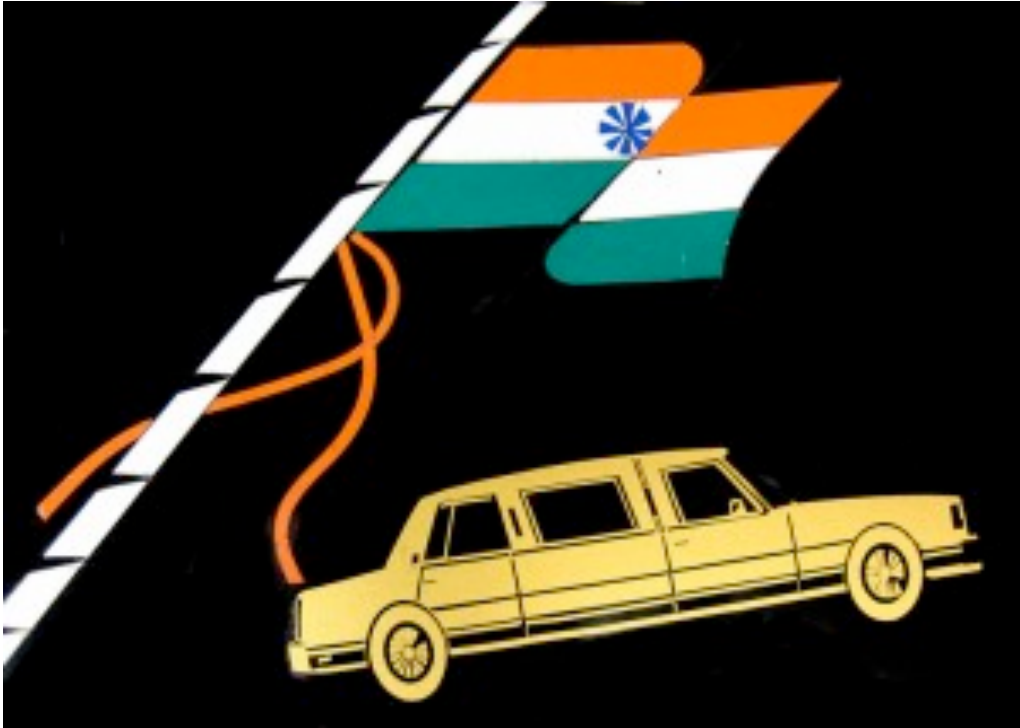
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India's biggest deficit

The challenge of making rational public policy in a democratic India.

Meena Kadri



Even in advanced democracies, public policy rarely follows the textbook script. There are many competing interests whose demands need to be balanced and the policy that emerges from a negotiated consensus reflects the usual give-and-take of popular politics. In a developing country like India with its insurmountable challenges and weak institutions, public policy is largely held hostage to immediate political concerns. When issues defy immediate solutions, there is an understandable desire to do 'something' which reflect certain

normative goals even though the practical effects may be minimal or even counterproductive.

Take for instance the proposal to establish a women's only bank as outlined in the 2013 budget recently presented by Finance Minister P Chidambaram. The goal is worthy enough: Greater financial inclusion of women, a particularly imperative consideration in an era where indirect subsidies are being replaced with direct cash transfers.

But as Priya Ravichandran argues in *Mint*, all it is likely to achieve is to further entrench the odious system of “separate but equal.” The state fails to ensure security for Indian women? No problem: run separate buses or simply reserve metro coaches. In this environment of competitive pandering, we can expect other proposals which segregate women and rescue the state from any semblance of accountability.

So here we encounter the first challenge: Populism may be inherent in a democracy but in India it often supplants any notion of effective public policy. In many ways, Indian democracy represents a paradox. While it is boisterous and visibly competitive from the outside, there is a high degree of homogeneity attached to it. Lack of independent and effective think tanks and a climate of intellectual incestuousness have ensured that the policymaking process reflects a cacophony of voices that are all essentially making the same arguments. No wonder, the proposed bank was received with thumping of desks by both the UPA Chairperson Sonia Gandhi and the Leader of Opposition Sushma Swaraj. And those who oppose such measures are likely to be dismissed as urban elitists – even by other urban elitists- who are simply unaware of the needs of the ‘real’ Indian women.

The second challenge India faces is the state’s lack of capacity to implement the policies it so strongly endorses. Here again we are faced with a paradox: While public sector enterprises like Air India and Railways are overstaffed and highly inefficient, it is a country with a smaller diplomatic corps than tiny New Zealand. Or take policing where India falls woefully short of global norms. The

Indian judiciary is legendary for its glacial pace – and a litigation happy government exacerbates the problem – but it is equally true that even the mighty Supreme Court struggles to fill its sanctioned strength. Unsurprisingly, outside of the moneyed elite, the process itself is punishment in India.

As author Gurcharan Das has argued, India needs a liberal state which does fewer things but does them well. But this argument is a hard sell in India. The middle class which has benefited from economic reforms views the state more as a roadblock to its aspirations rather than a scaffold for its soaring ambitions. It is hard to argue that the poor who may be struggling to meet their basic needs should care about the strength of the police, who they frequently view as their tormentors.

Populism may be inherent in a democracy but in India it often supplants any notion of effective public policy.

This may be slowly changing. As the agitation over the Delhi gang rape case showed, the Indian middle class is beginning to realise that it has a stake in a well-functioning state. If the recent trends of state elections are any indication then good governance has some electoral salience. Even the handout friendly United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government has belatedly recognised the electoral purchase of an aspirational middle class. A drastic change is unlikely in the near

future but a reinventing of the state may well be on its way.

Third, the policies pursued by its government often fail to reflect the limitations of India's development. Despite its remarkable growth over the last two decades, India remains a poor country. With barely three percent of its citizens as income tax payers and a low tax-GDP ratio, the Indian state lacks the resources to implement the policies it champions. Worse, it wastes precious resources in implementing policies which may be attractive in abstract but are unsuitable for India's current needs.

Take for instance something as simple as seat belt laws. Despite some controversy in the academic literature, at least in theory, increased seat belt usage would be expected to save lives. But as Vivek Dehejia and Rupa Subramanya point out in their new book *Indianomix: Making Sense of Modern India*, the vast majority of fatalities on Delhi roads are pedestrians. Even if seatbelt laws are properly enforced, they would hardly make a dent in the tragically high number of traffic deaths. Should not the severely undermanned Delhi Traffic Police then direct its limited resources towards ensuring that pedestrians are able to safely cross the road rather than worry about errant car drivers? The argument is not that the safety of car drivers does not matter. Of course, it does but to recognise that even the safety-challenged cars vastly improve the odds of surviving a trip on Indian roads.

In an ideal world, this would not be an either/or choice. But in a resource constrained state, India must make choices which reflect its limitations and not merely its aspirations. Otherwise, we would be left with ineffectual policies which serve little purpose except starkly illustrating the constraints of the Indian state.

It is easy enough to point to vast pockets of utter deprivation in India and to demand that the government provide immediate succor. Some even argue that in the pursuit of growth, India is sacrificing the needs of its most vulnerable citizens. But this argument ignores an important fact. A rich India would be far better placed to provide for its neediest citizens compared to a poor India, despite all the generosity of heart it may summon. As the government itself has belatedly recognised, it is economic growth which oils the engines of social justice. To sacrifice growth at the altar of equity in this stage of India's development would hurt the poor the most.

So here in a nutshell is the challenge India faces. It cannot ignore populist considerations in a democracy but it should not make public policy completely subservient to populism. And as it augments its capacity in certain essential areas, it should resist the temptation for *mai-baapism*: to be everything for all its citizens. It is a fine balance but then who said India was easy?

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The ‘What if’s of our energy security

Ensuring energy security requires a holistic view and concerted action by all branches of the government.

SoraZG



Uptil the 19th century, securing supplies of salt was of critical importance for the cold nations of the western world, as it was the only-known preservative of food. Food (being available only for a few months a year) needed to be stored and salt made this possible. Wars were fought over salt as not all countries had their own salt reserves. During the American Revolution, British loyalists tried the tactics of cutting off salt supplies to the revolting colonies, which would have led to the starvation of its people in a few days. Thus, salt security

was an essential part of survival strategy then.

While we are no longer dependent on salt to preserve food, other sources such as electricity play that role. Production of electricity, in turn, needs to be secured by assured supplies of fuels such as oil, coal and gas. Important as the dimension of ensuring adequacy supplies is, “Energy Security” has other facets to it. India is almost completely dependent on imported oil for its transportation needs and is thus always vulnerable. Reserve capacity can provide some buffer, but in the absence

of diversity of fuel options, the vulnerability will remain.

Several countries have set up independent bodies to assess short-term and long-term risks to reliability of energy supplies. For example, the US Energy Security Council was formed with the mandate of diminishing the inordinate strategic importance of oil, which stems from its virtual monopoly over transportation fuel. The Council explains the point further: "Oil's status as a strategic commodity – a product whose disruption or extravagant cost could cause the collapse of our economy – poses significant economic, security and health vulnerabilities for the United States. These vulnerabilities drain pocket books, skew American foreign policy and burden our military." The North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) was set up to provide an independent review of the long-term reliability of the North American bulk power system while identifying trends, emerging issues and potential concerns. Its focus is on reliability and it does not concern itself with mundane aspects of energy pricing and efficiency.

With only 0.5 percent of the world's oil resources and over 16 percent of the world's population, India should be concerned about its energy security. We need to ask ourselves some critical questions and find some answers. How do we handle different situations related to this matter? What if there is a resurgence of Arab Spring and oil production is disrupted? What if Iran carries out its threat to block the Strait of Hormuz through which most ships that meet our crude oil requirement pass? What is the backup plan for the movement of fuel and essential

commodities in case of a month long truckers strike? How are we going to run thermal plans if coal production doesn't keep pace with electricity demand? What do we do if the coal-exporting countries form a cartel and hike the prices? What happens when our defence needs clash with our energy security needs? Can we afford to have a repeat of the incident of August last when the entire Northern grid including the capital and many defence establishments went without electricity for several hours? Are environmental considerations paramount, even at the cost of energy security? What if more thermal plants were to be shut down due to shortage of water? And many more. This war-gaming must be undertaken on priority.

With only 0.5 percent of the world's oil resources and over 16 percent of the world's population, India should be concerned about its energy security.

The Integrated Energy Policy released by an Expert Committee of the Planning Commission in 2006 made a good beginning. It provided a definition for Energy Security when it said "We are energy secure when we can supply lifeline energy to all our citizens irrespective of their ability to pay for it as well as meet their effective demand for safe and convenient energy to satisfy their various needs at competitive prices at all times and with a prescribed confidence level considering shocks and disruptions that can be reasonably

expected". After this, the Expert Committee disbanded and the Integrated Energy Policy has not been revisited again.

Obviously, such deliberations cannot be left solely to the Planning Commission that submits its report once in a few years. Given the dynamics of energy supply and demand, and the frequent course-correction that is required, it requires constant vigilance and proactive action.

An Energy Security Division was formed in 2007 in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) with a view to sensitise and assist our Missions abroad in identifying possible opportunities for Indian companies, in acquiring energy assets overseas, and in building strategic partnerships with foreign companies. This has evidently helped. GAIL and ONGC have been more aggressive and have succeeded in securing supplies from more diverse sources.

But keeping this division in the MEA limits its scope. Energy security lies at the confluence of geopolitics, geo-economics and social security. It requires a holistic view and ideally, there should be a Minister of Energy charged with that responsibility. If the current political system doesn't offer that space, the next option would be to entrust the task to an independent agency reporting directly to the Prime Minister and engaging with various Ministries (petroleum, power, coal, railways, road transport, shipping, aviation, external affairs, defence) on all aspects that could affect the energy security of the nation. It should not be reduced to another toothless organisation that makes periodic recommendations with no powers to implement.

We need to realise that energy is what enables and drives our development. We need to do all we can to keep it flowing.

GULZAR NATARAJAN

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The challenge with law enforcement

Develop local strategies that seek to increase the civic sensibilities and public responsibilities of citizens

Prasad Kholkute



The popular explanation for India's dysfunctional democracy is its corrupt and weak governance. We despair at the lack of accountability within public systems and the resultant pervasive corruption. Opinion leaders lament at the state's inability to enforce its own laws and statutes.

We have some of the most progressive legislations and well-conceived laws on every social or public issue. While there are many failings, it cannot be denied that most of these laws contain adequate

penal provisions and clear enforcement mechanisms. But their implementation, to achieve the desired policy objectives remains a critical last mile gap.

Civic indiscretions like littering and public urination, building deviations, street encroachments, traffic violations, tax evasion and so on, go unpunished despite the egregious nature of their transgression of regulations. Failure to enforce the law on social and gender-related crimes and punish offenders is commonplace. Corruption within

public systems, despite being so pervasive, virtually goes unrestrained. A majority of public officials regularly abscond from work. The common feature of all these examples is undoubtedly the failure to enforce existing laws.

Why do we stumble when it comes to enforcing rules and regulations? Conventional wisdom has it that this enforcement failure is similar to governance failures elsewhere. Accordingly, corrupt officials take bribes and collude or the apathetic ones turn a blind eye to such offences. Some aver that it is a part of Indian culture. This argument does not hold true when we look at Indians, who flout all civic rules and norms in their own country embrace them when they travel abroad. They are disciplined and dedicated to their work. This highlights the importance of social environments in shaping human behavioral responses.

The governance failure explanation assumes that individuals violate laws because the penal cost of doing so is minimal or nothing. Therefore, compliance with laws will increase dramatically if there is a certainty of punishment associated with breaking law. But corrupt and apathetic officials, empowered with enforcement of laws, choose not to do so and let violators go scot-free. This simplified narrative does not convey the full story.

It gives the impression that fear of punishment is the primary reason why people abide by the law and that it is possible for officials to enforce laws if they choose to. Both assumptions are questionable.

The first overlooks the powerful influence of people's civic sensibilities in bringing about collective conformity to

law. In societies marked by widespread conformity to law of the land, civic sensibility is atleast as much responsible for enforcing compliance with laws as the fear of punishment. The deterrent effect of enforcement is meaningfully effective only at the margins, on the small minority most likely to violate them. In simple terms, strong enforcement will be successful in deterring the exceptions, not the norm. In contrast, when the overwhelming majority violates law, then deviance becomes the norm, the non-stigmatised convention.

Local governments and communities should be given adequate powers and finances and entrusted with the responsibility of managing these problems.

In this context, behavioural psychologists have shown how positive messages that highlight conformity to rules or social objectives elicit far greater responsiveness than negative messages which either highlight the magnitude of the problem or warn about the consequences of deviation. Accordingly, messages which highlight that 80 percent of people are paying taxes, are more likely to be effective than those which claim that half the people do not pay taxes or which warns of exemplary punishments. Clearly, the realisation that you are deviating from the norm is very effective in discouraging potential violators.

Second, when the majority violates law, enforcement becomes expensive, beyond the administrative capabilities of a functionally and geographically over-stretched field level bureaucracy. It is impossible for even well-intentioned and committed officials to uniformly enforce law with the existing resources in any meaningful manner. It is no surprise that numerous such efforts over time, to enforce compliance on these apparently simple problems have very rarely succeeded.

There are no easy routes out of this low-level equilibrium in which we are entrapped. The ideal solution would be for strategies that seek to increase the civic sensibilities and public responsibilities of citizens. Inculcating civic spiritedness among people and getting them not to litter or comply with lane driving rules, and doing this on scale, is a very difficult transformation to achieve. Compounding the problems, India's weak administrative system is in no position to manage this process effectively.

In the circumstances, a realistic approach to addressing this challenge is to expedite the process of social internalisation by bringing in local

accountability. Since the nature of such problems and its possible solutions vary across areas, location-specific enforcement strategies are more likely to be effective. The design of such strategies in turn depends on local initiative, driven by the respective local officials and community.

Local governments and communities should be given adequate powers and finances and entrusted with the responsibility of managing these problems. Enlightened local government officials should be allowed to adopt strategies that enforce rules through local accountability. This aligns well with the political imperative of decentralisation. Such local initiative, when complemented with effective enforcement of prevailing laws, is most likely to internalise a culture of compliance with laws.

As a million local accountability initiatives bloom, a majority of them are most certain to fail. But the surviving bright spots should provide the impetus for social internalisation of our laws and regulations. It appears to be the best shot we have at increasing the enforcement of our laws and improving governance.

SUNIL S

Sunil S is the former editor of Security Research Review at Bharat-Rakshak.com

Kulturkampf in Pakistan

Pakistan army is engaged in a battle with the jihadis to control the cultural mindscape

Olly Farrell



The Pakistan Army is in trouble and it is under simultaneous attack on several fronts. The blistering pace of India's military modernisation is leaving it in the dust. The feudal Pakistani politicians want to cut it down to size. The people of Pakistan are upset over its lack of accountability. And the Pakistani jihadi community wants righteous vengeance.

In order to retain the ability to confront India and America, the Pakistan Army must engage *jihadig*roups. However

every handshake with the *jihadis* betrays Pakistan Army's incompetence. The *jihadis* appear heroes who can do what the Pakistan Army cannot.

After being betrayed by the Pakistan army during the Lal Masjid siege, the *jihadis* went to war with them. Eventually they declared the Pakistani Army soldiers (who participated in anti-jihadi operations) as *kafirs*. The Army in turn, declared the jihadis to be anti-Pakistan forces in league with the

unholy trinity of the Indian R&AW, American CIA and Israeli Mossad.

The jihadis already had a media campaign. The internet was already filled with speeches by pro-jihad preachers, martyrdom videos and [shots of kaffirs being beheaded](#). This was part of an older fundraising infrastructure set up for the Afghan and Kashmir jihads. Maulana Rafiuddin Usmani, the Mufti-e-Azam Pakistan struck the first blow in a speech in the aftermath of the Lal Masjid siege. In [his speech](#) he refused to unequivocally (delete) condemn the Ghazi brothers and their actions. This was quickly followed by a [verbal assault on Gen. Musharraf by Syed Adnan Kakakhel](#), a mureed at Jamia Binoria. These pieces alone put the jihadis ahead of the Pakistan Army in the public debate.

The jihadis had long used a monophonic acapella form called the nasheed to promote their ideas. The nasheeds were in Urdu, and were easy enough for anyone to sing along

The Army had its fan club, but now it needed to reach a broader audience. It launched a number of [TV serials](#) that provided a glimpse into the personal lives of the soldiers who participated in the war against the Jihadis. The Army produced its [own martyrdom videos](#), [eulogies of dead soldiers](#), and interviews with their parents. Central to the Pakistani Army effort on the internet

was a group of people led by Syed Zaiduzzaman Hamid that organised itself into an entity known as [Pakistan Ka Khuda Hafiz](#) and began to post flattering portraits of the army's efforts against the jihadis. In the face of the jihadi visions of Islamic nationalism, the Zaid Hamid crowd flashed an equally virulent brand of Pakistani hyper-nationalism that backed the Army. If the jihadis demonised India, America and Israel – Zaid Hamid went two steps further and demonised the entire world. His efforts symbolised the desperation of the Army.

As this grand ideological war progressed an unlikely battle developed for control over the muzak. The jihadis had long used a monophonic acapella form called the *nasheed* to promote their ideas. The *nasheeds* were in Urdu, and were easy enough for anyone to sing along to. These could be played in the background and it would go unnoticed that they were urging one to do terrible things. The most influential and chilling *nasheed* to come from Pakistan was "[Koi talash karna chahe](#)" (Even if someone wanted to search). It was released by a Lashkar-e-Taiba media entity called [NiceKiller80](#) in November 2008. The words go as follows:

Koi talash karna chahe,

(Even if someone wanted to search (for me))

Toh talash kar sake na,

(Their search would fail)

Chun chun key mere tukde,

(Finding only bits and pieces)

Poori laash kar sake na

(They would not be able to reassemble me (my corpse))

The *nasheed* would have been ignored, if it hadn't been for a steady stream of mentally handicapped children who were performing suicide bombings. As its circulation in Pakistan quickly approached that of the *Qom nasheed*, it was clear to everyone that left unchecked this nasheed alone would legitimise the jihadi campaign of suicide bombing in Pakistani minds.

It was at this point that a number of *Qaumi Tarane* (National Songs) began to appear in the Pakistani media. Though they were not quite as catchy as the *Talash nasheed*, Zaid Hamid's friends dutifully [added these songs to videos](#) eulogising the Pakistan Army. The songs had little impact. Overt criticism of Zaid Hamid on the web grew. The Army needed a really good song otherwise it would lose the battle for the *muzak*, and *jihadi* thoughts would seize the minds of the young and restless in small town Pakistan.

The first relief on this front came from a

wildly popular Punjabi song, [Udeekan](#), sung by Jawad Kahlown and Shahzaman Alam. The music video bears the unmistakable mark of Kamran Yar Kami's genius. In the video Jawad and Shahzaman drive around a deserted road in a Ford Mustang from the 70s. The message sent is simple: Pakistanis are searching for a lost love on the deserted highway of fate. And Pakistan is cool – you see no Jihadis or suicide bombers or IEDs here – just a peasant on the side of the road wearing sombrero and strumming a guitar. The wonderful music that springs from his guitar, where is the music coming from you ask? It is coming from the great land of Pakistan itself.

Those that care to know would recognise that this has all been done before – first in post WWII Europe by the CIA and later less successfully by Arya Mehr's men in late 70s. Will it now work in Pakistan?

RAVIKIRAN S RAO

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Profiles in poverty

By cracking down on legal but imperfect options for the poor, we push them towards making an illegal and terrible choice



nikki

Speaking of poverty through anecdotal experience is often berated. Anecdotal experience has its limitations. It runs the risk of basing policy decisions on hard cases rather than on the typical case. Nonetheless, anecdotal evidence helps illustrate what data elaborates on. It points to gaps in the data or suggests places that need to be further explored.

Take the case of my household help, who along with her husband, is unlettered. Her daughter is married and does not live with them while her unmarried son does. She went into debt for her daughter's wedding, and is now working to pay it off. The earnings of the family easily put it above the Planning Commission's poverty line, but

the family has no savings. Three cheques for Rs 5,000 each, representing the son's salary for three months have been lying in their house uncashed because he does not have a bank account. No one in the family has had experience navigating a bank's bureaucracy or an understanding of how to obtain proof of identity and residence. They have applied for Aadhaar, but it will be months before they are issued the card. They had visited a branch of a private bank to understand what it took to open an account and were sent off with unhelpful directions. In an attempt to obtain proof of identity, they paid someone Rs 300 for a PAN card, but nothing came of it.

Years ago, her family had received Rs 1 lakh from the sale of a plot of land they owned. They believed that having such an amount of money meant that they would no longer need to work and were very surprised when the entire sum ran out by the end of the year. The fact that they did not have a bank account to put their money into made some difference in how soon they managed to run through it. The woman is now paying off debts she incurred for her daughter's wedding, and the interest runs to around 4 percent a month or over 60 percent compounded.

How typical is this woman's situation? Given India's heterogeneity, there is no typical situation and given the size of India's population, even the atypical case has millions of examples. But it must be pointed out that this woman is certainly not the poorest person in India. The case of her household elucidates that there is a significant proportion of people in India, for whom the system fails, not by withholding money or the opportunity to earn it, but by not providing the financial infrastructure to help them save and invest it. These people are ill-served by regulations like the RBI's KYC norms that make it tougher to open bank accounts than it should be. In general, regulations that seem merely onerous to a middle class person tend to be too complicated and constitute an unbearable burden for a person who isn't used to dealing with them.

They are also ill-served by the poorly thought out crackdown on microfinance institutions as was carried out in Andhra Pradesh. A 25 percent rate of interest

seems usurious till one realises that the alternative for the poor person is 60 percent. Frequently, serving the poorest may involve charging them higher rates, because the cost of reaching them is high – and this may still be okay, because the alternative for the poor is an exploitative choice. If we crack down on a legal, but imperfect option for the poor, we push them to make an illegal and terrible choice that gives no recourse if things go wrong.

It is said that the plural of anecdote is not data. What is meant by this is that one should not generalise from individual examples. But in another sense, what is data but individual examples multiplied millions of times over? When the National Sample Survey reveals that 32 percent of Indians are poor, the statistic conceals the fact that it represents nearly 400 million individuals, each with his or her own story of coping with, failing to get out of, or worse still, lapsing back into a state of destitution. There are many millions who live above the poverty line, some of whom were poor a decade back and have come out of poverty since.

The poverty headcount number is a static number that fails to capture the dynamics of this movement. We need to build better models with more detail than this headcount number. We need to capture to a fuller extent the profile of people who are poor, how factors like industrialisation, agricultural policies, the weather, inflation, etc. affect their movement into or out of poverty.

Poverty is too important to be used as a battleground between headline numbers and selective anecdotal evidence.

SUSHOBHAN MUKHERJEE

Sushobhan Mukherjee (@SUSHOBHAN) builds brands, causes and ideas

#Shahbag- A personal view

Is Shahbag Bangladesh's second Mukti Juddho?

Rajiv Ashrafi



Bangladesh was born in the first decade of my life. At three, my friends and I played at being Mukti Bahini against the villainous Pakistanis. Then came 1975 and the death of Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rehman. Apart from those highpoints, Bangladesh remained a peripheral unless parochialism was a factor.

And then came Shahbag. Like most interesting issues nowadays, #Shahbag gained popularity via Twitter, from a Bangladeshi friend (@rezwan) followed by tweets, Facebook updates and

YouTube videos. Two successive trips to London (where I visited Brick Lane to assess the mood in the largest Bangladeshi enclave outside the subcontinent) and interactions with a Bangladeshi friend (@shahanasiddiqui), who is a vocal critic of the ways of the Shahbag, I realised I was intrigued and at the same time confused.

It is tempting to look at the political scenario in Bangladesh and construct a conflict narrative around the secular Awami League and the Islamist BNP.

Much has been written about this, mostly partisan. For a view of the situation, that takes into account the myriad complex strands, [Nitin Pai says](#) "Although the sight of massive crowds baying for blood is unsettling, the Shahbag protests are not merely about hanging murderers. Bangladesh is in a remarkable, and perhaps unprecedented, situation: large crowds have gathered in a Muslim-majority country protesting against Islamist politics. This is really a massive public rejection of parties like the Jamaat-i-Islami and a repudiation of their ideology"

There have been two camps online as there have been on ground. On the ground, Shahbag has been a movement that has seen children brought there by their parents. Online clashes between vocal Jamaat activists condemning the "immoral and atheist" Shahbag activists are rife. Do remember that anti-Islamist blogger, Rajib Haider was murdered, allegedly by the Jamaat. Did that ignite the interwebs?

It is tempting to look at Bangladesh's religious composition of 90 percent Muslims and opine that it is the The Arab Spring, Bangladesh version is Shahbag. Bangladesh is a homogeneous country with a proud syncretic culture. Unlike Pakistan, which has all but obliterated its pre-Islamic history to create a distorted narrative, Bangladeshi pride in a 1000 year old culture that gave rise to Buddhism in Tibet and China, Vaishnavism and at least two Nobel laureates in Rabindranath Tagore and Amartya Sen is palpable. A majority of Bangladeshis happen to be Muslim, but all of them are proud to be part of a distinct culture. This idea of pluralism that goes beyond the moment of birth of

the Bangladeshi nation is vital to understand the drivers of #Shahbag.

This idea of pluralism that goes beyond the moment of birth of the Bangladeshi nation is vital to understand the drivers of #Shahbag.

On running a Google Trends analysis, the peak of the Shahbag searches almost rivalled the much more famous Arab Spring. While Rajib Haider's death hit the headlines, it didn't quite cause the expected stir on the internet. It is tempting to label it as yet another [social media revolution](#). Part of this movement was driven in a successful attempt to involve the large Bangladeshi diaspora. A variety of channels are in use, [one of them](#) "was hosted and co-ordinated by 6 young people and the whole idea was implemented in 2-3 hours. And these people were roaming Shahbag whole day long carrying a web cam and a Laptop".

Even more interesting is [an analysis](#) of how Twitter was used. Many new users joined Twitter for the purpose of amplifying the movement. Clever use of hashtags and tagging influential media channels helped to drive awareness and involvement. Movements today are driven by the omni channel- Facebook marshals the faithful and the interested, YouTube and UStream magnify what is happening on-ground and Twitter amplifies the news.

My belief is that #Shahbag is the first tranche of Bangladesh's demographic

dividend. Discussions of the demographic dividend are driven by the outside world looking in rather than insiders charting their own destiny. If one switches to the inside-out, a very different picture emerges. Consider the median age of Bangladesh – at 23, one of the youngest. Consider the almost perfect [population pyramid](#), (from this dated, but very consistent pattern. These are globally connected, digitally enabled people who are ambitious for

themselves and their nation. Therein lies the key difference.

When you see it thus, this is the second *Mukti Juddho*. It is a war for freedom – freedom to soar leaving the past behind, not locked up, but resolved. It is a war for freedom – for religion to be an individual faith rather than pulpit driven Islamism. It is a war for the freedom of the soul, of hope and of being the foremost among the N-11.

S IRFAN HABIB

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Is Bhagat Singh relevant today?

On his 82nd Martyrdom day, Shaheed Bhagat Singh's ideology contrasts with the trajectory of independent India's growth



USB

We remember Bhagat Singh as a brave-heart, who killed Saunders to avenge Lala Lajpat Rai's death and later dared the British by bombing the Assembly in 1929. His martyrdom is venerated, and rightly so. But we seldom ponder over his intellectual legacy- something which sets him apart from most other martyrs. He has left behind a legacy that everyone wants to appropriate, yet most fail to look beyond the romantic image

of a young gun-toting nationalist. Perhaps the reason is that this is the image created in the official colonial records, an image we inherited and accepted as truth.

Colonial records told the common people that revolutionary activities were dastardly crimes, committed for the gratification of money and blood lust. In fact, this is clearly reflected in the contemporary consciousness,

particularly of the youth, who visualise Bhagat Singh as someone who terrorised the British through his violent deeds. Today he is an icon. His daring spirit lauded; his posters sold on the pavements and his stickers dot windscreens. It may be heartening to see that he is still loved and venerated but the question is: do we have an understanding of his politics and ideas? Even his early faith in violence and terrorism was qualitatively different from the contemporary terrorist violence and he transcended that, to eventually espouse a revolutionary vision to transform independent India into a secular, socialist and an egalitarian society.

*For him Inquilab
Zindabad was not
merely an emotional war
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and which would give
birth to a new state and a
new social order.*

Bhagat Singh evokes boundless approbation from people who already have a surfeit of heroes, for reasons that are far from simple. When most senior leaders of the country had only one immediate goal — the attainment of freedom, Bhagat Singh, hardly out of his teens, had the prescience to look beyond the immediate. He was no ordinary revolutionary with a passion to die or kill for the cause of freedom. His vision was to establish a classless society and

his short life was dedicated to the pursuit of this ideal.

However, most of his ideals remain elusive. Today, we have moved away from the commitments of Bhagat Singh and his revolutionary organisations – *Naujawan Bharat Sabha* and the *Hindustan Socialist Republican Association*. What would Bhagat Singh look like today if he had been alive? In a world where Marxism and socialism look obsolete and discredited, Bhagat Singh's passionate commitment to the above ideals would appear redundant. He was martyred much before independence in 1931, yet many of his comrades lived through the post independent India and continued with their struggle to bring in a political, social and economic order where every one (and not just the privileged few) would have an equal opportunity.

Bhagat Singh has left behind a significant intellectual legacy, which we need to engage with. Had he been alive and lived through independent India, he would have been disappointed with the way we built our new nation. For him *Inquilab Zindabad* was not merely an emotional war cry but was a lofty ideal to end class distinctions and which would give birth to a new state and a new social order. One of his last messages from prison on March 3rd, 1931 was quite explicit saying, "The struggle in India would continue so long as a handful of exploiters go on exploiting the labour of the common people for their own ends. It matters little whether these exploiters are purely British capitalists, or British and Indians in alliance, or even purely Indian". A young man with this vision for his country would surely be disenchanted

to see some paths on the trajectory of India's progress.

On the societal front we are still trying to make sense and grapple with the issues of caste and religious discriminations. Bhagat Singh had definitive views on both casteism and communalism in the 1920s. In his journalistic writings and court statements, he mocked the political leadership for its hypocrisy in dealing with these crucial issues, expressing surprise that we are still debating who should be allowed into a temple and who should have access to the Vedas. "A dog can sit in our lap", he wrote, "can walk around freely in our kitchen while mere touch of a human being will lead to a religious outrage". He went on to say that "Malaviyaji, (Madan Mohan Malaviya) our great social reformer and sympathiser of untouchables, gets himself garlanded by a sweeper but bathes with his clothes on to cleanse himself of defilement... we worship animals but can't sit with human beings".

Bhagat Singh categorically said that we need to be inclusive without emphasising on *shuddhi* or recitation of the *kalma*. According to him, religion should not matter at all, and if otherwise, then it was a social evil. Such an unequivocal position on caste and untouchability is rare to find, even amongst radical social reformers today. He was equally blunt on the issue of

communalism and saw communal amity as an important part of his political programme. However, unlike the Congress, he did not believe in the appeasement of religious faiths or in raising slogans such as *Allah-o-Akbar*, *Sat Sri Akal* and *Bande Mataram* as a means of demonstrating secular faith. On the contrary, he raised two slogans, *Inquilab Zindabad* and *Hindustan Zindabad*, hailing the revolution and the country. Bhagat Singh was acutely conscious of the growing menace of communalism in the 1920s — the decade that saw the emergence of the *Rashtriya Swyamsevak Sangh* and the *Tableeghi Jamaat*. Today, both organisations are multi-pronged with several political and cultural fronts posing a serious threat to the socio-political fabric of the Indian society. Bhagat Singh questioned the policy of encouraging competing communalism, which ultimately led to the partition of the country in 1947. He thus stands out in bold relief as a modern national leader and thinker, emphasising the separation of religion from politics and state as true secularism.

Without undermining the achievements of our Republic over the last six decades, it can be observed that socio-political and economic disparities continue and have increased to a great extent. Bhagat Singh's vision of social and political justice continues to be relevant and his ideals should inspire us to take the struggle forward.

PAVAN SRINATH

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From open data to a culture of openness

If India is to transition to a true knowledge economy, open access, availability and contestability of public knowledge is paramount



dawgbyte77

Building sound public policies requires robust information systems and data. The state has the primary onus on provisioning for the public good that is knowledge – and traditionally the working of the Indian state involved secrecy as a core principle. The state enjoyed a monopoly on generation and access to large parts of knowledge and data relevant to public affairs, with its citizens often kept in the dark. Thanks to

almost two decades of campaigns in the country, this paradigm has been overturned significantly.

When it comes to knowledge, information and data – the form of opening up determines how usable it is. Since the passing of the Right to Information Act into law, the focus of many advocacy efforts has shifted to usability and ease of access to government information and data.

Release of information *suo moto* decreases the time cost of accessing information, and when it comes to data it is quite obvious that whether it is shared as a photocopy, PDF or an excel file makes a world of difference. Unfettered open access to data and information generated through taxpayer funds may remain a distant goal, but there are constant signs of progress. The Census of India is an exemplar of openness and friendliness as a data provider, and the Government Data Portal: data.gov.in was launched just last year is being populated with more datasets every month.

Increasing openness of official information is but one leg of improving the 'public good' quality of knowledge. Along with openness, the contestability of information has also increased in India over the last two decades. As [Pratab Bhanu Mehta](#) mentions, when official pollution numbers are not trusted, you have private organisations like the Centre for Science and Environment to monitor the pollution on their own and provide independent evidence.

Research institutions, not-for-profit organisations and the media are playing a larger role in generating data that is relevant to public affairs. Many private players routinely engage in data collection exercises, and conduct large surveys for research and to answer specific questions. Not only is this being done on a local scale, but nationally as well. Bangalore-based Public Affairs Centre [conducted a national analysis of public services in India](#) about a decade ago, and the ASER Centre [provides state and district level information](#) on children's learning levels and education

across the country, year after year. These are but two examples out of many.

While citizens of India are demanding more openness from their government and private entities are playing a greater role in contributing to public knowledge, openness as a culture has been far slower off the mark. Barring exceptions, research and not-for-profit organisations are far from open with their data in India today.

Data is collected with great care, cost and effort and is often used with great effect – but rarely more than once or twice. The original researchers often do not have the inclination, incentives or the luxury of going beyond their original mandates in analysis. Just like government data is underutilised if it only remains in an official report, the utility of privately generated data may far exceed this limited use.

Data and information are also network goods. Data sets can complement each other and together they can yield richer knowledge than they would on their own. A lack of public sharing of data sets and a culture that does not expect that of its knowledge creators prevents this from happening.

None of this is to say that individuals are not generous with what data is at their disposal. While rent-seeking remains a problem, many researchers and organisations are happy to oblige requests for data. However, this remains sub-optimal as personally investigating and enquiring after data results in very high costs for searching – if not monetary, then certainly in time and effort spent. The only way to change this is if more people adopt online, open disclosure of data.

While an open culture around data is desirable, it takes several complementary actions to get there. Access to private data, whether it is generated by a business or by an NGO, cannot be treated as a rights issue. Individual freedom and private

While citizens of India are demanding more openness from their government and private entities are playing a greater role in contributing to public knowledge, openness as a culture has been far slower off the mark.

property need to be respected while creating enabling incentives and encouraging voluntary efforts to open up information.

As research and data get exposed, the first problem that arises is that faults and errors become evident and can cause people to beat a quick retreat. What needs to be kept in mind is that pioneers who open their data sets before others can reap a large signaling dividend. Modest research with openness could have a higher impact than a superior quality study that remains closed. If sustained, open data researchers can build a reputation that is several notches above those who keep their data closed.

The second problem is that open disclosure results in a loss of control – where unknown anonymous users could use it without giving proper credit and for radically different ends. While this can indeed happen, the public benefit from open disclosure and the credit for it remains higher than such losses.

The third problem that can arise is that as the culture of sharing is weak and data science is still nascent in India, the benefits of opening up data sets may take a lot of time to yield impressive results. What is also needed is a kick starter – perhaps in the form of scholarships for students and researchers to use high quality datasets and publish new results.

Donors and foundations funding research and analysis also have an important role to play here – by committing to openness and providing platforms that enable sharing, they can change the work cultures in organisations that they fund. Official mandates to that effect government-funded research would work the same way. In India there is ample precedent for comfort: agencies such as the World Bank and others have embraced open data, it is for others to keep up.

If India is to transition to a true knowledge economy, open access, availability and contestability of public knowledge is paramount. A narrow campaign to liberate government data will have far less of a lasting impact than a broader attempt at creating a culture of openness and sharing around information and data. It is time we started on the latter.

DAVEED GARTENSTEIN ROSS

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The impact of systemic factors

Placing the Arab uprisings in an economic and environmental context

UggboyaUgg



In their contribution to a new [study](#) on the Arab Uprisings and climate change that has recently received a [great deal](#) of attention, David Michel and Mona Yacoubian of the Stimson Center note that much of the early enthusiasm for the changes wrought by the region's revolutions has "yielded to more sober assessments of the deep and complex challenges embedded in these ongoing transformations." Understanding the systemic challenges that countries in the region face is important to assessing

these states' chances of transforming into stable and relatively prosperous democracies. These factors should also be of keen interest to analysts outside the region who are attempting to understand future security challenges that may emerge.

One overarching factor that will influence the region's future prospects is the economic situation, which served as a [driving force](#) behind the uprisings in the first place. Other factors that will heavily influence stability are related to

environmental constraints, including the availability of fresh water, food prices, and the manner in which climate change may serve as an additional 'stressor' in the words of Anne-Marie Slaughter. Further, some political scientists see the demographics in these countries as an additional challenge. Thus, even if countries like Libya weren't beset by internal violence and central governments unable to extend their writ throughout their own territory, they would still face daunting challenges.

Let's start with the economic situation, which has been grave for some time. As Michel and Yacoubian note, Middle East and North African (MENA) countries' GDP per capita only grew a total of 6.4 percent from 1980 through 2004, about 0.5 percent per year for the entire period. During the same period, GDP per capita rose 4.5 percent per year in Asia. Similarly, unemployment had been steadily rising in MENA, hammering younger people in particular. It is unsurprising that so many Arab youth pointed to unemployment as a primary cause of why they took to the streets during the uprisings.

The question to ask is: are economic conditions likely to improve with new governments? Of the countries that have seen a change of regime, Libya obviously has the best economic potential, given its oil wealth. At present, though, the benefits derived from its petroleum exports are highly localised, and are not reaching the central government. While Tripoli sits in the western part of Libya, the oil is concentrated in the east, where Cyrenaica has [declared](#) its semi-autonomy. But not everyone thinks the localisation of oil revenue is problematic: Jack Goldstone, the

Virginia E. and John T. Hazel Professor of Public Policy at George Mason University, told me that he thinks if the central government is forced to negotiate over oil revenues, it "is going to require people to make the bargains that are needed to create a multipolar, pluralist government for Libya."

For Tunisia, the outlook is darker. Though the Tunisian economy may have been turning a corner at the beginning of 2013, the February 6th assassination of opposition leader Chokri Belaid seems to have [thrust it back into turmoil](#). Belaid's killing raised the ugly spectre of major unrest and almost immediately bookings for French tourists plummeted by 80 percent compared to the previous year. Mustafa Kamal Nabil, the former governor of Tunisia's central bank, told a local newspaper that "the restoration of political stability and security is a priority because there will be no investment, and no tourism or exports, without stability."

Egypt's outlook is considerably worse than Tunisia's. One German newspaper [described](#) the Egyptian economy as "a time bomb" due to such factors as a weakening currency, dwindling foreign currency reserves, and an unreliable power grid that saps businesses' productivity. The confluence of these factors may result in the government slashing its price subsidies for everyday essentials such as gas and bread, which could be destabilising in a country where forty percent of the population "lives below the poverty line, subsisting on two dollars a day."

Economic challenges are exacerbated by concerns related to the environment, and indeed the two are significantly connected. Michel and Yacoubian write

that MENA, as a region, is “the most water stressed in the world,” a claim borne out by available data. The World Bank’s [data](#) of internal freshwater resources per capita shows that Morocco has 899 cubic meters, while Tunisia has 393 and Algeria has 313. Libya has only

Other factors that will heavily influence stability are related to environmental constraints, including the availability of fresh water, food prices, and the manner in which climate change may serve as an additional ‘stressor’ in the words of Anne-Marie Slaughter.

109 cubic meters of freshwater resources per capita, while Egypt has twenty-two. In contrast, India’s per capita freshwater resources stand at 1,165, and in the United States the number is 9,044.

This scarcity of freshwater resources intersects with agricultural issues, since the vast majority (85 percent) of water withdrawals in MENA are for agriculture. As a result, Michel and Yacoubian note that countries in the region have become major food importers—a strategy that reduces domestic water usage but makes the importers “vulnerable to global price fluctuations of staple crops and export restrictions imposed by other countries.”

This vulnerability intersects with concerns about climate change. The thesis of the report on the Arab Uprisings and climate change, which was co-sponsored by the Center for American Progress, the Stimson Center, and the Center for Climate and Security, is not that climate change was the cause of the Uprisings. Rather, it holds that climate change functioned as a ‘stressor’. Illustrating this, Troy Sternberg, a postdoctoral research fellow in the School of Geography at Oxford University, outlines in his contribution to the volume how China’s “once-in-a-century winter drought” in the winter of 2010-11 caused a spike in global wheat prices, which more than doubled as China was forced to import more wheat. These higher wheat prices in turn influenced the protests in Egypt, where “bread provides one-third of the caloric intake.”

The population in MENA is continuing to grow, as is the world’s population. This will place an additional strain on resources. In this context, climate change isn’t going away as a stressor: over time it will make extreme weather events like the Chinese drought more likely, which in turn will have an impact on food markets that will be felt in MENA and beyond.

A final question relates to the demographics of the countries in transition. A growing body of political science research focuses on demographics and political transition. When I spoke with Jack Goldstone, one of the prominent scholars to study this issue, he discussed research findings that countries with a population of 35 and older are most likely to be stable. “When the median age is 25-35,” he said, “about half the countries are stable,

and when the median age is 25 or below, about 10-15 percent are stable.” Using this framework, Goldstone noted that Tunisia has moved to a median age of over 25, and thus “has at least a decent shot of moving to a stable democracy.” Egypt is on the border of having a median age of 25, as is Libya. But Syria and Yemen, which are currently embroiled in the chaos that could produce a change in government, have very young demographics that this research considers less conducive to stability.

Not all political scientists are convinced by the connection between

demographics and instability. American political scientist Jay Ulfelder told me that he is not convinced by the causal argument that has been advanced in this regard. But demographic factors may pose an additional challenge in the context of an already difficult situation.

It is fitting that some of the early overoptimistic analyses of a region in transition have given way. Three dictators are now gone, which must be regarded as a good thing. But neither democracy nor prosperity will automatically replace them, and the entire region seems destined for a bumpy road.

LORO HORTA

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The elephant stumbles in the savanna

India struggles to keep up with China in Mozambique

In recent years China, India and other emerging powers such as Brazil have increased their presence in Africa. Mozambique in East Africa has attracted considerable interest from major powers, both from the East and the West. A country that relied primarily on agricultural exports such as cashew-nuts and cotton, is now fast emerging as a major powerhouse for natural resources. Coal, oil, natural gas and other minerals are now believed to exist in significant reserves.

According to the *Financial Times*, the country may receive over \$10 billion a year from gas revenues in the near future. This is no small amount if one takes into account that the annual state budget is \$3.6 billion of which a significant amount comes from donors. The country is believed to house one of the world's largest coal reserves. Mozambique also possesses a latent potential to become a major biofuel producer.

China's and India's relations with Mozambique go back to the 1960s when both nations were sympathetic to its

struggle for independence from Portugal. Large communities of Indians and Pakistanis reside in the country where they play a major role in the economy. In 2010, trade between China and Mozambique reached \$690 million — a significant increase if one takes into account that in 2007 bilateral trade was \$285 million. According to several financial publications, China's Wuhan Iron and Steel has invested \$1 billion in the coal sector while Mozambique's national radio reported that Chinese company Kingho plans to invest up to \$5 billion in the coalmines in Tete province. China's state-owned banks have given the country large soft loans for infrastructure including a \$2.3 billion to build a large dam.

India on the other hand is struggling to build a strong presence in this emerging resource rich nation. In 2009, India pledged a \$500 million credited line for Mozambique. However, in March 2011 Mozambican prime minister Aires Ali asked the Indian Exim Bank to expedite the release of the funds. In contrast, China's Exim Bank has granted



Jean-Etienne Minh-Duy Poirrier

substantial loans without necessitating such official requests. India has since granted another \$20 million in loans to Mozambique.

In January 2011, the Mozambican government informed the then visiting Indian minister for coal Sriprakash Jaiswal that the state-owned Coal India would only be given extra mining concession if the company showed progress on its implementation. Coal India was granted two blocks in the Tete Province two years before. However, little progress had been made in developing them. As a result requests from Indian companies for more blocks had been denied. Other Indian pledges of investments in various sectors have not been forthcoming.

Indian RICON Railroad Company was selected to rehabilitate rail road infrastructure in the central province of Sofala. The project was funded by the World Bank while RICON was responsible for its implementation in coordination with the Mozambican government. The project was to end by 2009. However, from the beginning the venture was marred in controversy with allegations of poor quality standards and corruption. Independent engineers found numerous flaws through the project and RICON was constantly behind schedule. While the World Bank bears part responsibility for the fiasco, the involvement of an Indian company did not contribute to improving India's image. Indeed things were further aggravated when in 2010 neighbouring Tanzania canceled a contract with the same company alleging bad management. While the project seems to be finally moving the serious problems and delays gave it a bad name.

Several Indian officials when questioned on India's struggle to keep up with China, point to the fact that India being a democracy, has to deal with a divided parliament and a civil society. Unlike China, India cannot give out billions in loans, to a country most Indian citizens know little of. India too has a large population of poor who have the power to vote.

While India is struggling to keep up with China, private Indian entrepreneurs remain optimistic with increasing larger numbers showing interest in the country.

While democracy has its complications, it does not explain the entire situation. Brazil too is a democracy and Brazilian companies like Vale are well ahead of China and India for the Mozambiquan resources. Australia – one of the oldest democracies has also been doing well in Africa's mining sector. Several Indian companies have performed in Latin America and Southeast Asia. There are no Chinese counterparts to Infosys, Reliance or Tata — privately owned Indian corporate giants that need little governmental support to survive, unlike most Chinese companies.

Perhaps here lies the problem. Many of the companies and banks that have run into trouble in Mozambique are state owned, known for their inefficiency in India. India's strategy in Africa is

faltering largely because the world's largest democracy is trying to emulate the strategies of the world's largest authoritarian state. Instead of focusing on major investments by state owned companies and loans by state banks, India should focus on encouraging its companies to invest in Africa. New Delhi should use its diplomatic influence to facilitate trade deals and other arrangements that allow Indian private companies to increase their presence in the continent.

While China is constantly looking at the United States of America as a benchmark for success, India is constantly looking at China. In its eagerness to catch up with China, India has been emulating its strategy in Africa in the hope that it will bring similar rewards. Perhaps India should look at the success of the Brazilian and Australian companies in Africa.

Some Indian diplomats have also complained that India is behind China when it comes to having a coherent policy towards Africa. Indian policy towards China in Africa and China in general tends to be rather reactive and

lacking in long term planning.

While India is struggling to keep up with China, private Indian entrepreneurs remain optimistic with increasing larger numbers showing interest in the country. Coal India is far from throwing in the towel announcing that it had secured \$6.5 billion to invest in several overseas projects including its two coal blocks in Mozambique.

Attracted by the potential of rich natural resources the United States, Japan, Australia and several European powers have refocused their presence in the country. China was able to build an impressive presence in several African countries largely because of the neglect and arrogance of the West. However, in resource, rich countries that are smart enough to attract diverse sources of investment this is likely to change soon. While a lot has been said about China and India in Africa, the dragon and the elephant are far from being alone in the savanna. Whether Mozambique's new found wealth will bring prosperity to its people or whether a small elite and foreign interests will profit remains to be seen.

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Excellence and equity in education

Active contribution from private schools, parents, teachers and administration, and not just their cooperation, is needed for the RTE Act to shape the education ecosystem.

Simply CVR



The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act or the Right to Education Act (RTE), which came into force from April 2010 is a strange piece of legislation where the intentions are noble, the right is redundant and the provisions are controversial. As some of the provisions of RTE Act will be enforced from next month (three years from the commencement of the Act), a fresh look into the Act is important.

The objective of delivering quality primary education can be achieved, without tinkering with the existing structures of private and unaided institutions. Our past experiences with government interventions in private institutions and property are not very encouraging. While private sector should be considered an important stakeholder in the education eco-system, shifting the burden of delivering social justice to it is not convincing.

A challenge to the RTE Act comes from meeting the quantity and quality norms for teachers. Many studies reaffirm the immense contributions of a good teacher on the learning outcomes of a child. The quality of institutions which produce teachers is mediocre. Among the 8 lakh aspiring teachers, 99 percent with a valid education degree, failed to clear the Central Teacher Eligibility Test (CTET). The performance in the State Eligibility Test is equally worrying. Among 6.67 lakh teacher aspirants, only 2448 students (0.37 percent) passed the Tamil Nadu Teacher Eligibility Test (TNTET). In public schools alone, we have close to 13 lakhs teacher vacancies. Though there is a clause in the Act stating that the Central Government can relax minimum qualifications required for a teacher it should be the last resort. The quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers.

Meeting the infrastructure requirements specified in the Act is also a challenge. According to the Act, every school must have a library, play ground and a kitchen among other requirements. The difficulties in meeting these requirements should not undermine the need for this infrastructure. The mental and physical health of a child should be given consideration. However, all this is a huge burden on any private institution. In such a situation, intermediate options should be explored and allowed, for instance renting or sharing play-grounds, libraries and kitchen. The demand to waive off these norms is a regressive move.

This Act also makes Grade Retention illegal. It also makes continuous and comprehensive evaluation (CCE) mandatory. The idea behind these norms is that the burden of learning

should be more on the teacher than on the student. It is incumbent on the teachers and the school to address the learning disparities that a child may have accumulated till the age of six (or till the current grade). Grade retention discourages the student and effects his motivation to continue in the school. If the performance of a child is checked periodically and if the problems are addressed consistently, the need for retaining a child does not arise. For this framework to work, we need efficient teachers and administration. ASER reports show worrying levels of “functional illiteracy” - students are completing grades without learning the basics. Without proper systems in place, strengthening the administration and training teachers, these provisions (contrary to the intentions) can be counterproductive.

The intention of the government to regulate the education space is clear and the private sector must be prepared.

Another criticisms against this Act is that it does not address the issues of accountability. It is never an easy task to design a structure of accountability to a public education system, more so to our scale. The most effective and decentralised accountability mechanism is to make parents the stake holders of the system. But as Dr Pratap Bhanu Mehta explains, “there is a brute sociological fact: no government school system can run successfully if there is a large-scale secession of elites from the

public system. The accountability dynamics are largely determined by the presence of the powerful. In India this secession is almost total.” The Act makes a bold step in this direction by mandating that 75 percent of School Management Committee should comprise of parents. The challenge lies in convincing parents to send their children to school and monitor its functioning.

The intention of the government to regulate the education space is clear and the private sector must be prepared. As Dr Mehta says, all professions need to be regulated to some degree and education certainly should be.

Education should not be looked only as an instrument of individual mobility. It is also a powerful instrument for the government to mitigate socio-economic inequalities. Many studies confirm that it is possible to achieve excellence with equity, and countries which do well on primary education are those which combine the two.

Whether the RTE Act shapes out education eco-system in that direction depends not just in cooperation but also in contribution from private schools, parents, teachers and administration. Without this it will be just another legislation, grand on promises but nothing on delivery.

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The Criminal Laws Amendment related to sexual offences

Summarising some of the key changes in the various laws related to sexual offences

The Delhi gang rape episode in December and the subsequent public outcry have led to some significant legislative changes. The central government constituted a committee chaired by Justice JS Verma to suggest changes to various criminal laws to increase protection to women from sexual crimes. After the Verma Committee presented its report, the central government promulgated an Ordinance that incorporated some of its suggestions. Subsequently, a Bill was passed in Parliament, with several changes from the Ordinance. In this note, we summarise some of the key changes in the various laws.

The Indian Penal Code (IPC) has been amended to specify new offences, modify definitions of some offences, and enhance penalties. There are also procedural changes. The IPC is amended to penalise any public servant who fails to record information related to offences such as stalking, voyeurism, rape, acid attacks, trafficking etc. The

new Act amends the Code of Criminal Procedure to require that any complaint by a woman related to these offences should be recorded by a woman police officer. It removes the requirement of sanction for prosecution by a public servant for these offences (though, the provision is retained in case of armed forces). The new Act also amends the Indian Evidence Act: in case of rape, it prohibits admission of evidence or cross-examination related to the victim's moral character or previous sexual experience. These amendments are expected to ease filing of cases, as well as protect victims from harassment during the trial process.

The Ordinance had replaced the offence of 'rape' with that of "sexual assault" in which both the perpetrator and the victim could be of either sex. The Act passed by the Parliament reverts to the earlier concept that rape can be perpetrated only by a man on a woman. It expands the definition to include penetration of private parts by objects



etc. It specifies that the penalty for gang rape would be at least twenty years, and could be life imprisonment (i.e., until the person dies). It also prescribes life imprisonment for repeat offenders, and life imprisonment or death penalty if the victim dies or causes her to be in a persistent vegetative state. It has enhanced penalties for offences committed by those in positions of authority or fiduciary position.

One of the contentious provisions emanates from the PCSO Act that was passed last year. The IPC had the age of consent at 16 years, i.e., consent by any woman below that age was not valid, and would be considered as rape. The PCSO Act raised this age to 18 years. The Verma Committee recommended a decrease to 16 years but both the Ordinance and the new Act have amended IPC to make this 18 years, and consistent with the PCSO Act. The National Commission for Women had recommended that an exception should be made if the victim was above 16 years of age, and the age difference was less than five years; the objective was to prevent criminalising consensual sex between young persons (when the woman was at 16 years old). This recommendation has not been accepted.?

Another contentious provision relates to marital rape. The IPC exempts any sexual act by a man with his wife, if she is at least 15 years old. That is, it assumes that the act of marriage implies consent. The Verma Committee and the National Commission for Women had recommended that this exemption be removed. The Ordinance raised the age of the wife to 16 years. The new Act has reverted to the earlier provision of 15 years, i.e., marital rape is not an offence if the wife is 15 years old.?

The IPC now includes acid attacks, sexual harassment, stalking and voyeurism as offences. Acid attacks will carry penalty ranging from 10 years imprisonment to life imprisonment; attempt to commit this offence will carry penalty of five to seven years. Sexual harassment is defined as an action by a man that includes physical contact involving unwelcome and explicit sexual overtures, demand for sexual favours, showing pornography against the will of a woman, or making sexually coloured remarks. The penalty is imprisonment up to three years. It is pertinent to note that Parliament has also passed a separate law in this session regarding sexual harassment of women at the workplace.

The IPC is amended to penalise any public servant who fails to record information related to offences such as stalking, voyeurism, rape, acid attacks, trafficking etc.

Stalking is defined as repeated attempts to follow or contact a woman despite her disinterest, or monitoring her use of internet, email or other electronic communication. The penalty is imprisonment of up to three years for the first conviction, and up to five years for subsequent convictions. Voyeurism is defined as the viewing or capturing the image by a man of a woman engaging in a private act. The penalty is imprisonment of one to three years for the first conviction, and three to seven

years for subsequent conviction. The definition of this offence and penalty differ from a similar offence defined in the Information Technology Act. That Act penalises the capture of images of private parts of both men and women, and prescribes a penalty of up to three years imprisonment.

The Ordinance included several offences for which the penalty was greater than that prescribed under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (PCSO Act). The Bill that was passed by Parliament amends the PCSO Act to state that if the penalty for these offences is higher in the IPC, the higher penalty would apply.

This amendment Bill makes significant changes to criminal law. These include several contentious provisions such as the increase in the age of consent and the lack of change in law to make marital rape an offence. The Bill was not referred to the standing committee for examination (though an earlier version was). The final Bill was introduced on 19th March, and passed the same day by Lok Sabha, and a couple of days later, by Rajya Sabha. Perhaps, Parliament should follow the practice (laid down in the Rules, but occasionally waived) of waiting at least a couple of days after introducing any Bill before discussing and passing it.

MARK SAFRANSKI

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The Re-industrial Revolution

The revolutionary Maker movement is upon us

Three-dimensional or 3D printing, for decades a marginalised activity where the crude fabrication devices were confined to tinkerers, hobbyists and the dusty corners of industrial workshops is coming into its own. Falling prices for increasingly sophisticated, powerful and versatile machines along with an enthusiastic online communities of Makers are rapidly moving 3D printers from industrial curiosities to viable commercial uses and soon, to must-have consumer gadgets. The emerging socio-economic implication of desktop manufacturing is that the transformative effect 3D printers in the long term will not be evolutionary, but revolutionary.

Chris Anderson, now an evangelist for the 'Maker' movement, epitomised the A-list technology journalist. A former editor of the prestigious scientific journals *Nature* and *Science*, Anderson wrote for *The Economist* and became the Editor in Chief of the geeky but influential *Wired* magazine at age thirty-nine. He followed this with two *New York Times* bestsellers, *The Long Tail* and *Free: the Future of a Radical Price* and was

named one of TIME magazine's Top 100 thinkers. Anderson was at the top of his game and his career as a writer and editor seemed assured.

Then, in 2012 Anderson abruptly quit *Wired* and founded *3DRobotics*, a rapidly growing start-up manufacturer of UAV technology and drone quadcopter kits. The reason for the dramatic switch of career is featured in his latest book, [*Makers: The New Industrial Revolution*](#) central to which is an idea that "atoms are the new bits".

Here's the history of two decades of innovation in two sentences: "The past ten years have been about discovering new ways to create, invent, and work together on the Web. The next ten years will be about applying those lessons to the real world." This book is about the next ten years.

Anderson offers a cogent argument, one on which he has staked his own economic future, that the world is at the cusp of a historical moment where the imminent mass commercialisation of 3D printing will intersect with an open source maker movement culture; that

this combination will be bigger, of greater economic importance and more transformative to global society than was the Web. A revolution in localised and home production with the potential to alter the race to the bottom logic of globalisation by allowing manufacturing entrepreneurs everywhere to be smart, small, nimble, radically decentralised and global by sharing bits and selling atoms.

Pointing to the technological evolution in the recent past, Anderson sketches a similar linear path for 3D printing beyond the current limitations of additive manufacturing techniques: "... But that's because we're at the dot-matrix equivalent of 3-D printers. Remember them, from the 1980s? They were noisy, monochrome, and crude—tiny pins hitting a black ink ribbon, little more than an automated electric typewriter. But today, just a generation later, we have cheap and silent inkjets that print in full color with resolution almost indistinguishable from professional printing".

The reach and breadth of 3D printing may soon become more dramatic than even the "liberating force" Anderson has described.

"Now fast-forward the clock a decade or two from today's early 3-D printers. They will be fast, silent, and able to print a wide range of materials, from plastics to wood pulp and even food. They will have multiple color cartridges, just like

your inkjet, and be able to print in as many color combinations. They will be able to print images on the surface of an object even finer than the best toy factories today. They may even be able to print electronic circuits right into the object itself. Just add batteries."

If anything, Anderson has managed to understate the velocity with which the technology is advancing and the creative uses to which users are putting their machines. Since the publication of *Makers*, a succession of news stories have revealed everything from Formlabs' slickly designed [Form 1 machine](#) to users printing [functional \(if fragile\) assault rifles](#), [car bodies](#) and biomedical surgical replacements [for missing pieces of the human skull](#). One gets the sense that the genie is out of the bottle.

Anderson is not merely making a technologically oriented argument, but a profoundly cultural one. In his view, the existence of the [Maker movement](#), operating on the collaborative, "open-source" ethos is an iterative, accelerative driver of economic change that complements the technology. Anderson writes: "...In short, the Maker Movement shares three characteristics, all of which are transformative:

1. People using digital desktop tools to create designs for new products and prototype them (digital DIY).
2. A cultural norm to share those designs and collaborate with others in online communities.
3. The use of common design file standards that allow anyone, if they desire, to send their designs to commercial manufacturing services to be produced in any number, just as easily as they can fabricate them on their desktop. This radically foreshortens the

path from idea to entrepreneurship, just as the Web did in software, information, and content”.

In other words, the *Makers* are akin to the Linux crowd and the hacktivists in the coming internet of things. A community of stigmergy, dedicated to creating, tweaking and sharing in order to improve making.

The reach and breadth of 3D printing may soon become more dramatic than even the “liberating force” Anderson has described. Two new books, not yet released but both due out in May, also discuss the potential of 3D technology. [*America 3.0: Rebooting American Prosperity in the 21st Century*](#) by James Bennett and Michael Lotus, posits robust growth in localised

manufacturing in the context of more resilient and politically decentralised communities. The second, [*Radical Abundance*](#) by nanotechnologist Eric Drexler, explains the “quiet rise of macromolecular nanotechnologies” and the “prospects for a deep transformation in the material basis of civilization”. This conjures the prospect of technology that will allow tremendous leaps of advancement. One can envision genomic medical printing, manufacturing food from the polypeptide level up and exotic home metallurgy, right on your desktop.

Modern man who first left the cottage for the factory in mid-eighteenth century Britain may bring the factory home in the twenty-first.

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